

REMARKS

Claims 11, 13-22, 37, 39-41, and 43-44 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action dated January 30, 2006, claims 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 37, 38, 41 and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,941,946 to Baldwin et al. ("Baldwin") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,787 to Aronson et al. ("Aronson"). Claims 13, 16, 19, 21, 24, 27-29, 39 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin and Aronson in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,275,848 to Arnold ("Arnold"). Claims 14, 15, 25, 40 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin, Aronson, and Arnold in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,311,210 to Foladare et al. ("Foladare"). Claims 22 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin and Aronson in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,632,011 to Landfield et al. ("Landfield").

The disclosed embodiments of the invention will now be discussed in comparison to the prior art. Of course, the discussion of the disclosed embodiments, and the discussion of the differences between the disclosed embodiments and the prior art subject matter, do not define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims. Instead, such discussed differences merely help the Examiner appreciate important claim distinctions discussed thereafter.

The present application discloses a method and system for securely distributing an Email communication to multiple individual recipients in an efficient manner using centralized storage and management. According to one embodiment, the method includes receiving an Email communication containing an indication of the recipient(s) for the message, and making a determination whether the indication is for multiple recipients. Unlike conventional methods, the present method uses an email communication program that makes a conditional decision that if the indication is for multiple recipients, the program does not send the Email communication to the recipients, but rather centrally stores the Email communication on a server, and sends only a short notification of the Email communication to each of the multiple recipients without sending the Email communication itself. Thus, a single copy of the Email communication can be stored on a server computer for delivery on an individual basis to multiple recipients when requested. The program does not send the Email communication to any recipient until it receives a response from at least one of the recipients that contains a request for the Email

communication. If the indication is not for multiple recipients the Email communication is sent to the recipient without being stored.

Baldwin has been cited in this Office Action as purportedly disclosing providing an Email communication program on a server that performs the acts of receiving an Email communication, including an indication of at least one recipient to receive the Email communication, and determining by the Email communication program whether multiple recipients of the Email communication have been indicated in the received indication. (Office Action dated 01/30/06, Page, 2, ¶ 3-6). Baldwin is further cited for disclosing the acts of if it is determined that multiple recipients have been indicated, notifying each of the multiple recipients of the Email communication without sending the Email communication to the recipients, and in response to a request for the Email communication from a recipient, sending the Email communication to the recipient. (Office Action dated 01/30/06, Page 2, ¶ 7-9). In particular, Baldwin teaches that “if there are multiple recipients, the sender’s station deposits the message to the message stores associated with each of the recipient.” (Baldwin, col. 3, lines 29-31). Thus, Baldwin clearly teaches against storing only a single copy of the Email communication on the server, and, in fact, stresses the importance of storing multiple copies of the Email communication on the server that each recipient can access.

Of particular importance, Baldwin always stores the Email communication on the server regardless of whether multiple recipients have been indicated on the Email communication. Accordingly, if the system disclosed in Baldwin determines that multiple recipients have not been indicated, Baldwin still stores the Email communication on the server and requires the recipient to request Email communication from the mail stores on the server in order to access the Email communication. In contrast, Applicant’s embodiments sends the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication. Although it was asserted in the present Office Action on Page 3, ¶ 13 that Baldwin discloses the acts of if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication, the undersigned cannot find such a teaching, either expressly or inherently, in the portions of Baldwin cited in the Office Action. In fact, Baldwin teaches away from such a system and method because it stresses the importance of the sender’s station directly depositing the message into multiple message stores on the server for each of the recipients of the Email communication

or depositing the message into message stores selected by the sender, and the recipient accessing the Email by requesting the Email communication. (Baldwin, col. 3, lines 29-33).

Therefore, Baldwin does not disclose or fairly suggest a system and method in which if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication. The other cited references do not remedy the above deficiencies of Baldwin.

Turning now to the claims, the patentably distinct differences between the cited references and the claim language will be specifically pointed out. Claim 11 recites, in-part, “providing an Email communication program on a server that performs the acts of: receiving an Email communication, including an indication of at least one recipient to receive the Email communication; determining by the Email communication program, whether multiple recipients of the Email communication have been indicated in the received indication; if it is determined that multiple recipients have been indicated, storing a single copy of the Email communication on the server; notifying each of the multiple recipients of the Email communication without sending the Email communication to the recipients; and in response to a request for the Email communication from a recipient, sending the Email communication to the recipient; and if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication.” (Emphasis Added). The cited references and, in particular Baldwin, do not teach or suggest the limitations “if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication.” Therefore, claim 11 is patentable over the cited references.

Claim 37 recites, in-part, “if it is determined that multiple recipients have been indicated, storing a single copy of the Email communication on a server; notifying each of the multiple recipients of the Email communication without sending the Email communication to the recipients; in response to a request for the Email communication from a recipient, sending the Email communication to the recipient; and if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication.” (Emphasis Added). The cited references and, in particular Baldwin, do not teach or suggest the limitations “if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated, sending the Email communication to the recipient without waiting for a

request for the Email communication.” Therefore, claim 37 is patentable over the cited references.

Claim 41 recites, in-part, “an Email communication distributor program that sends the Email communication to a single recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated.” (Emphasis Added). Again, the cited references and, in particular Baldwin, do not teach or suggest the limitations “sends the Email communication to a single recipient without waiting for a request for the Email communication if it is determined that multiple recipients have not been indicated.” Therefore, claim 41 is patentable over the cited references.

Claims depending from claim 11, 37, and 41 are also allowable due to depending from an allowable base claim and further in view of the additional limitations recited in the dependent claims.

All of the claims remaining in the application (claims 11-29 and 37-44) are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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